

***Regional Integrated Sciences and Assessments  
FY2017 FFO Frequently Asked Questions***

Q1: What are the competition ID numbers for the RISA competitions?

A1: Competition 1- Arizona/New Mexico: 2620400

Competition 2- California/Nevada or Midwest US: 2620408

Q2: Is there any way we can submit a LOI if we miss the deadline?

A2: Once the LOI deadline has passed, LOIs cannot be submitted.

Q3: Can we submit a proposal despite not having submitted an LOI?

A3: LOIs are not a requirement, so you can still submit a proposal without going through the LOI stage. We would encourage you to view our FFO webinar slides on the RISA program and FFO:

<http://cpo.noaa.gov/ClimatePrograms/ClimateandSocietalInteractions/RISAProgram/RISAFederalFundingOpportunityFY17.aspx>. This may provide more background on the RISA program and the FFO.

Q4: Can a person be a PI on more than one RISA?

A4: Yes, but it is important to articulate how one will be positioned to handle the work associated with that commitment.

Q5: Is it possible for various faculty from one university to be on different, competing “teams” either with members within this university or in other combinations with others from other universities or agencies? I am trying to determine if this is indeed a limited call for our university, that is, only one team from our university can submit a proposal.

A5: Researchers from one university may participate in multiple proposals, and one university could be on multiple proposals (e.g. as a lead institution and as an affiliate). However, given the scope and scale of RISA proposals, we encourage you to use the LOI phase to make informed decisions about the merits of submitting multiple proposals.

Q6: Can all or a portion of a state not included in the list provided (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Minnesota, Missouri, and Wisconsin) be part of a Midwest RISA?

A6: It would be fine if a team scoped out a RISA for a region that spilled into neighboring states, however the focus should be on those listed.

Q7: Is there information available on past RISA awardees or successful proposals?

A7: The RISA website has information about all of our current teams:

<http://cpo.noaa.gov/ClimatePrograms/ClimateandSocietalInteractions/RISAProgram/RISATeams.aspx> We can share a successful proposal with interested applicants.

Q8: Can a non-profit organization serve as a lead institution or sub-awardee?

A8: Yes.

Q9: Is a federal center of lab (e.g. DOE national lab) eligible to participate in the RISA team?

A9: Yes, but note that we cannot support federal salaries.

Q10: How many winning teams are expected per region?

A10: The FFO call specifies that we could fund up to one team per region. The availability of funds to award a RISA team in all three regions is contingent on an increase in the RISA program budget.

Q11: What funding range is expected for RISA teams?

A11: The level of funding for a RISA team is expected to be \$600-700k/year over 5 years.

Q12: What denotes a “team”. Is it a group of researchers (within a single university or organization) or a group of individuals, institutions or agencies within the region?

A12: RISA teams are usually a largely academic-based consortia of multiple institutions with partners in Federal, state, regional, tribal, and local governments. NOAA funding cannot support federal salaries, but federal employees can be included as team members.

Q13: Does an institution have to be located in the region?

A13: It's not a Yes or No question. In the past, proposals from institutions well outside the region of interest have not reviewed well. However, many of those cases involved people on the opposite end of the US or thousands of miles outside the region. It helps tremendously to have a track record of engagement in and research on the region in question, including institutional partners in the region. Ultimately, reviewers focus on whether the investigator will be able to engage people in the region in person and, on a related note, whether they would be seen as an outsider with passing interest in issues that are very tangible and real.

Q14: For teams that are existing RISAs, may we cite work done by members of our team who are not official PIs in the new proposal? For the prior research section, do we include only research from the actual group of PIs listed on the proposal, or can we include previous research from the RISA even if the person who led it is not going to be a named PI on the new proposal? Where is the boundary of whose research is included?

A14: The section is explicitly intended to include prior research for the PIs named on the proposal. You can cite previous work of researchers not named as PIs in the project narrative.

Q15: The results of each prior research project led by the Principal Investigator(s) during the last three years relevant to the proposed effort should be summarized in brief paragraphs. If we have 4-5 PIs, that seems like it would end up with a much longer list than the two page limit allows.

A15: The FFO states that, for RISA, you only need to list the current and pending support for lead PIs. If you wish to include co-PIs, we recommend that you establish a website where

information on current and pending support can be accessed. However, we cannot guarantee that reviewers will access that website.

Q16: How important is it to hit the annual budgets tightly, as opposed to a bit of fluctuation, as long as the 5-year total is under the limit?

A16: For any given year, any amount up to \$700,000 can be proposed for the core RISA component. Anything above that amount per year may lose review points in the cost category under the review criteria. Given the budget outlooks, the range would be \$600-700K per year.

Q17: How should applicants fill out the SF424A NOAA budget forms for a 5- year RISA proposal?

A17: Complete years 1 through 4 on the first SF-424A. Year 5 will go on the second SF-424A. In addition, in the last column of the second SF-424A, you would insert the totals for each row from all the categories covering all 5 years (1-4 from the first SF-424A and year 5 from the second SF-424A). The totals should be derived from the line item categories, in section B. The categories are travel, personnel, etc.

Q18: Can we provide research and tools that relate to weather (i.e. short term events) as well as to climate (i.e. longer term conditions)?

A19: Our office is interested in supporting work that connects weather to climate but be sure to make the climate connection for the review process.

Q19: What should be the balance between research and products? For example, say a set of users want a seasonal forecast of a climate parameter that is currently not available from suppliers because it requires research to develop. Our RISA team then carries out the research to develop the product. Can the RISA now also take charge of regularly disseminating the new product through a website, forums, etc.? Or should we hope that the research findings will be disseminated to forecast suppliers (public and private) and they will start disseminating?

A20: We encourage RISAs to develop and disseminate products that provide a service for the region, particularly where they serve a purpose in investigating an overarching research question on the use of climate information. For example, RISAs have effectively used outlook products and forums as part of developing and maintaining an engagement strategy and as part of research on what constitutes timely and credible information. We do, however, encourage RISAs to also look for ways to transition those products to operational endpoints.

Q20: Can the NIDIS office provide letters of support?

A20: No.